

## **K-16 Roundtable**

September 2001

### **Background**

#### **I. What is K-16?**

K-16 refers to a national movement to provide seamless education from kindergarten, or earlier, through college. The goal is to create an educational system that promotes access, standards, accountability and lifelong learning in a thoughtful, deliberate, and coordinated manner. Issues that cross traditional educational boundaries include: (a) the relationship between high school graduation and college entrance requirements; (b) the development of high school college preparation classes; (c) the work of education departments to prepare teachers to teach to established K-12 essential learning requirements; (d) improving college readiness to reduce remediation costs and to help ensure student success in college, etc. There are many other examples of K-16 efforts.

A number of national organizations are addressing K-16 issues, including: the National Governors Association (NGA), the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), the Education Commission of the States (ECS), and the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO).

#### **II. The Importance of K-16: What role can we play?**

Increasing student performance and expanding access to higher education are fundamental goals for the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB). And linking K-12 achievement to higher education opportunity is one of five key goals adopted in the “2000 Master Plan for Higher Education.” By sponsoring a K-16 roundtable, the HECB has an opportunity to bring together key policy makers to help develop a systemic framework for viewing our disparate K-16 efforts.

#### **III. What are we doing to address our K-16 concerns?**

Last spring, the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) organization invited us to participate in a new SHEEO initiative called “Building Statewide K-16 Systems for Student Success.” SHEEO, in turn, has partnered with both the Education Commission of the States (ECS) and the “Pathways to College Network” to support these roundtable efforts. There are no strict guidelines directing the roundtables; in fact, we have been encouraged to tailor our roundtable to meet the unique interests and needs of our state. One of the tasks we will have completed before the roundtable convenes is an inventory of K-16 efforts under way in Washington.